

Obedience and the Gospel

Genesis 22:15–18

(black Bibles page 16; Children's Bibles page 42)

Today we end our series, *the Gospel According to Abraham*.

A review of gospel highlights from the life of Abraham:

1. *Promises*. "I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great... I will bless those who bless you... I will... **and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed**" (Gen 12:1-3)
 - ⇒ Gospel connection? This enormous promise was fulfilled in Christ, Abraham's offspring.
2. *Faith*. "And he [Abram] believed the Lord, and he [God] counted it to him as righteousness." (Gen 15:6)
 - ⇒ Gospel connection? Believing God (= faith) is what counts us as righteous and forgiven in God's sight, even though we're sinners and far from perfect. See Jesus emphasizing faith in passages like Mark 2:5.
3. *Covenant*. "On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram..." "As for you, you shall keep my covenant..." (Gen 15:18, 17:9)
 - ⇒ Gospel connection? God establishes a *deep* and *solemn* relationship, both of which were symbolized by blood. Christ institutes the New Covenant in his own blood, fulfilling the depth and solemnity of God's commitment to us.

And today: 4. *Obedience*.

"By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, **because you have done this** and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you... and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, **because you have obeyed my voice.**" (Gen 22:15-18)

Is obedience a bad word? Is it the same as "works" or "good works"?

Abraham's faith => Abraham's obedience => Blessing to others!

- This is true for us, too!

The Gospel connection for 4. *Obedience*:

"For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ... [for] **by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.**" (The Apostle Paul, Rom 5:17-19)

Questions for study and reflection:

1. Review three connections to the gospel from Abraham's life mentioned in the sermon: promises, faith, and covenant. Meditate on how each of these is fulfilled in Jesus.
2. Why are "works" and "good works" sometimes good and sometimes bad in the Bible? Look at Eph. 2:9-10 for an amazing example of both!
3. Why is "obedience" always a good word in the Bible? (Gen 49:10; Rom 1:5, 5:19, 6:16, 15:18, 16:19, 16:26; 2 Cor 7:15, 10:6; Philemon 1:21; Heb 5:8; 1 Peter 1:2, 1:22)
4. Can you think of an example in your life of how (difficult) obedience to God has become a source of blessing for others?
5. How is the good news of Jesus' obedience the greatest example of this? How did his obedience result in blessings for others that we could never duplicate with our obedience?